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2012

## Erk Russell Oral History Interview and Performance Project

Zach S. Henderson Library Special Collections

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## **OVERVIEW OF COLLECTION**

**Title:** Erk Russell Oral History Interview and Performance Project

**Date:** October 2007 - February 2008, 2012

**Extent:** 1 Box (0.42 linear feet)

**Creator:** Communication Arts Department, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Georgia Southern University, and The Averitt Center for the Arts, Statesboro, Georgia

**Language:** English

**Repository:** Zach S. Henderson Library Special Collections, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA. [specolle@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:specolle@georgiasouthern.edu), 912-478-7819, [library.georgiasouthern.edu](http://library.georgiasouthern.edu).

**Processing Note:** Collection processed by Autumn Johnson, Special Collections Librarian, in 2021. Finding aid created by Tyler Hendrix, Graduate Assistant.

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## **INFORMATION FOR USE OF COLLECTION**

**Conditions Governing Access:** The collection is open for research use.

**Physical Access:** Materials must be viewed in the Special Collections Reading Room under the supervision of Special Collections staff.

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**Preferred Citation:** Erk Russell Oral History Interview and Performance Project, Zach S. Henderson Library Special Collections, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA

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## **ABOUT THE COLLECTION**

**Biographical History:** Erksine "Erk" Russell was born on July 23, 1926 in Ensley, Alabama. He began playing football at a young age, and he earned a scholarship to play at Auburn University. While at Auburn, he became the final two-sport letterman in the school's history. After his playing career ended, Russell was hired on as an assistant coordinator, first at Auburn, then at Vanderbilt. In 1963, he was hired on as the Defensive Coordinator at the University of Georgia, where he remained for the next 17 years. While at UGA, Russell's defenses consistently kept opponents away from the endzone, and they propelled the team to a National Championship title in 1980. However, in 1981, Russell was hired to resurrect the dormant football program at Georgia Southern College (now Georgia Southern University), where he transitioned into the role of head coach once the team was formulated.. Within two years, the Georgia Southern Eagles football team won a Division 1-AA National Championship, and by the end of the decade, the team had acquired two more National Championship titles. In 1989, Erk Russell retired from his role as head coach. In retirement, Russell remained in Statesboro, where he remained a beloved member of the community. He died in Statesboro on September 8, 2006 at age 80.

**Scope and Content:** This collection consists of the typed transcripts of interviews with the friends and acquaintances of Coach Erk Russell, whom they worked alongside during his time as the Georgia Southern Eagles football coach in the 1980s and into his retirement in the 1990s. All interviews were conducted by volunteer interviewers from the Communication Arts Department at Georgia Southern University between October 2007 and February 2008.

**System of Arrangement:** This collection is arranged in chronological date order and subdivided into interviews based on the person being interviewed.

**Box 1:** 0200106539857

**Acquisitions Info:** Donated to Zach S. Henderson Library Special Collections, September 2012.

### **Access Points:**

Georgia Southern University  
Georgia Southern Eagles  
Football  
Statesboro, Georgia

## CONTAINER LISTING

**Box 1:** 0200106539857

<b><u>Items</u></b>	<b><u>Box Number</u></b>	<b><u>Folder Number</u></b>
Overview	1	1
Interview with Tim Chapman, May 2007	1	2
Interview with Jane Page, October 2007	1	3
Interview with Perk Robins, October 2007	1	3
Interview with Del Presley, October 2007	1	3
Interview with Nick Henry, October 2007	1	3
Interview with Bruce Yawn, November 2007	1	4
Interview with Tracy Ham, November 2007	1	4
Interview with Sandra Prince, December 2007	1	5
Interview with Alice Chastain, February 2008	1	6
Interview with Tim Durden, February 2008	1	6
Interview with Bucky Wagner, May 2008	1	7
Interview with Charlotte Woody, May 2008	1	7
Interview with Bill Perry, May 2008	1	7
Interview with Pat Hirsch, May 2008	1	7
Interview with Ric Mandes, June 2008	1	8
Interview with Kirbylene Stephens, June 2008	1	8